Noise pollution

464. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to a survey conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the noise level of Delhi is 95 decibels i.e. more than double of what is considered safe as per U.S. standards;

(b) whether any survey has been conducted by Government to find out the incidence of noise induced hearing loss, tinnitus accoustic trauma and mental disorientation because of high noise level in major cities in India;

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) what steps are postulated by Government to check the impairment of hearing ability of industrial workers in factories, establishments with a very high noise level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) The survey conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences indicates high noise levels in certain busy traffic roads of Delhi ranging upto 95 decibels. However, these are not more than double of what is considered safe as per U.S. standards. The permissible noise exposure under U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Act is 90 decibels for a period of 8 hours.

(b) and (c) Study of noise induced hearing loss and other related disabilities has been carried out in noise intensive industrial situations i.e. Factories where hearing loss prevalence has been reported from time to time in different parts of the country. However, studies have not been conducted in general population to find out specifically the prevalence of noise induced hearing loss and related problems.

(d) Steps taken include the following:—

— preventive measures for containment of noise;

— periodic medical check up of Industrial workers; and

— compensation for noise induced hearing loss.

Declaration of roads in Punjab as being of strategic importance

465. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in order to improve road communication for defence purposes, the Government of India have, from time to time, declared certain roads as being of strategic importance;

(b) whether there is any proposal sent to and pending with the Central Government to declare certain roads in Punjab as being of strategic importance; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and what action has been taken thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARUN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Some proposals have been received from the Government of Punjab by the Ministry of Transport. Declaration of roads as of strategic importance depends on security considerations. It would not be desirable to disclose details.

Encroachment upon Defence land in Todapur, New Delhi

466. SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some cantonment land in village Todapur, New Delhi has been encroached upon unauthorisedly and construction made on it;

(b) if so, what is the area of such land which has been encroached upon during the last one year;

(c) what action Government propose to take to remove the encroachments; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARUN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 17 encroachments comprising an area of 1.109 acres approximately have taken place during 1985.

(c) Appropriate action has already been initiated under the provisions of Cantonments Act for the removal of the encroachments.

(d) Does not arise.

Visa rackets

467. SHRI M. KADHARSHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of visa rackets busted in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras during the last three years;

(b) the number of persons arrested, charge-sheeted and convicted for the offence; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to prevent recurring of such rackets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL SECURITY (SHRI ARUN NEHRU): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Ganga action plan

468. SHRI M. KADHARSHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of money earmarked for Ganga action plan for the coming three years;

(b) whether any systematic plan has been chalked out for execution;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof;

(d) if the reply to part (b) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor; and

(e) what are the priority sectors likely to be taken up during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) The Planning Commission has approved a total outlay of Rs. 240 crores for the execution of schemes during the 7th Five Year Plan Period. The provision for 1986-87 is Rs. 52 crores. The provision agreed to for subsequent years will be determined as part of Annual Plan exercise.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) (1) A Works Programme for three States at a notional cost of Rs. 292.31 crores has been approved.

(2) Nodal Departments in three States of U.P., Bihar and West Bengal have been identified and agencies in these States have been designated for execution of schemes.

(3) A short list of consultants and contractors who can help these agencies, prepare and execute identified schemes have been prepared and made available to these States.

(4) Schemes which will be taken up this year and in 1986-87 in the identified locations have been specified.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The schemes included in the Ganga Action Plan may be broadly categorised as follows:

(1) renovation of existing pumping stations/treatment plants.

(2) construction of new pumping stations/treatment plants.

(3) diversion and laying of intercepting sewers.

(4) low cost and other sanitation schemes.

(5) river front development.

(6) scheme for biological conservation.

Some of the above schemes have already been taken up for implementation during the current financial year.